



News Flash – Vaccinate Early to Protect Against the Flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccination as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses. Medicare pays for the flu vaccine and its administration for seniors and other Medicare beneficiaries with no co-pay or deductible. This year's vaccine will protect against three different flu viruses, including the H1N1 virus that caused so much illness last flu season. Take advantage of each office visit and start protecting your patients as soon as your 2010-2011 seasonal flu vaccine arrives. And, don't forget to immunize yourself and your staff. Get Your Flu Vaccine - Not the Flu. Remember – Influenza vaccine plus its administration are covered Part B benefits. Note that influenza vaccine is NOT a Part D covered drug. For information about Medicare's coverage of the influenza vaccine and its administration, as well as related educational resources for health care professionals and their staff, please visit <http://www.cms.gov/AdultImmunizations> on the CMS website.

MLN Matters® Number: MM6837

Related Change Request (CR) #: 6837

Related CR Release Date: September 21, 2010

Effective Date: November 22, 2010

Related CR Transmittal #: R7720TN

Implementation Date: November 22, 2010

Medicare Fee-For-Service Emergency Policies and Procedures: Questions and Answers (Qs & As) for All Types of Emergencies and Disasters – Rescission of CRs 5099, 6146, 6164, 6174, 6209, 6256, 6280, 6284, and 6378

Provider Types Affected

This article is for physicians, providers, and suppliers submitting claims to Medicare contractors (carriers, DME Medicare Administrative Contractors (DME MACs), Fiscal Intermediaries (FIs), A/B Medicare Administrative Contractors (A/B MACs), and/or Regional Home Health Intermediaries (RHHIs)) for services provided to Medicare beneficiaries.

Provider Action Needed

This article is informational only and advises providers on where to find information regarding Medicare policies related to emergency guidance for the duration of the emergency, such as the H1N1 pandemic.

Disclaimer

This article was prepared as a service to the public and is not intended to grant rights or impose obligations. This article may contain references or links to statutes, regulations, or other policy materials. The information provided is only intended to be a general summary. It is not intended to take the place of either the written law or regulations. We encourage readers to review the specific statutes, regulations and other interpretive materials for a full and accurate statement of their contents.

Background

As part of its preparedness efforts for an influenza pandemic, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) developed certain emergency guidance and procedures that may be implemented for the Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) program in the event of a pandemic or disaster.

Additional pandemic-specific preparedness guidance and procedures were issued in prior Change Requests (CRs). CR 6837 rescinds the CRs implementing selected influenza pandemic-specific guidance and procedures. Specifically, CR 6837 rescinds CRs 5099, 6146, 6164, 6174, 6209, 6256, 6280, 6284, and 6378.

The guidance and procedures (in the form of Questions & Answers (Qs & As)) previously implemented by the aforementioned CRs will, instead, be made available on the CMS "Emergency" website at <http://www.cms.gov/Emergency/>, and entitled:

- "Emergency Qs & As – no 1135 waivers required," and
- "Emergency Qs & As – applicable only when an applicable 1135 waiver has been granted."

Additional Information

The official instruction, CR 6837, issued to your carrier, FI, A/B MAC, RHHI, and DME MAC regarding this change may be viewed at <http://www.cms.gov/Transmittals/downloads/R772OTN.pdf> on the CMS website.

If you have any questions, please contact your carrier, FI, A/B MAC, RHHI, or DME MAC at their toll-free number, which may be found at <http://www.cms.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/CallCenterTollNumDirectory.zip> on the CMS website.

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